GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3974
ANSWERED ON:10.08.2016
Sri Lankan Refugees in India
Senguttuvan Shri Balasubramaniam

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise and UT-wise statistics of the total number of Sri Lankan Tamils staying in India since the outbreak of civil war in Sri Lanka in 1983;

(b) whether Ministry has initiated any housing programme for the Sri Lankan Tamils in Sri Lanka and if so, the total amount spent and the total number of beneficiaries and the manner of provision of Indian sponsorship under the Indian Housing Scheme for the construction of houses for the Sri Lankan Tamils;

(c) whether the Ministry has worked out an understanding with the new Government in Sri Lanka to provide education and employment to the Sri Lankan refugees on their return to their homeland; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) According to the information shared by Government of Tamil Nadu and Government of Odisha, as on 01 January 2016, there are 64,144 refugees from Sri Lanka staying in 107 ordinary camps in Tamil Nadu and 22 refugees staying in 1 camp in Odisha. In addition, 36,861 refugees are staying outside the camps in Tamil Nadu after registering themselves at the nearest police station.

(b) Government of India is undertaking a project to construct 50,000 houses in Sri Lanka at a cost of INR 1372 crore. Under the pilot phase of the Project, 1,000 houses were constructed in Northern Province of Sri Lanka through an Indian Contractor. These houses were handed over to beneficiaries in July 2012. The second phase, to construct or repair 45,000 houses in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, is being implemented using an innovative owner-driven model, wherein the Government of India arranges technical support and financial assistance for the owner-beneficiaries to undertake the construction/repair of their houses themselves. Financial assistance of Sri Lankan Rs. 550,000 per beneficiary (Sri Lankan Rs. 250,000 in case of repair) is released in stages, and transferred directly into the bank accounts of the beneficiaries by the High Commission of India. As of 3 August, 44,200 houses have been constructed or repaired under the second phase. For the remaining 4000 houses, to be undertaken in the Central and Uva provinces for Indian Origin Tamils under the third phase, the construction work has begun on 1134 houses. The Government of Sri Lanka is to identify land for the remaining 2866 houses.

(c) & (d) Government of India encourages voluntary repatriation of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees to Sri Lanka. Government of India has emphasised to Government of Sri Lanka that a conducive environment should be created for Sri Lankan refugees to return to Sri Lanka on a voluntary basis. Government of Sri Lanka has been extending facilities, including education, to Sri Lankan citizens returning after staying as refugees in any country, including in India.